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AUTHOR Lua, Sokhong; And Others
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ABSTRACT

Reported is an exploratory investigation of attitudes toward child-rearing practices in Malaysia, including an attempt to investigate and analyze the nature and extent of involvement of Malaysian fathers in child care. There is also an abstract of a study of the influence of child-rearing practices on marital role expectations in Bengali, Tamilian, and Andhrite Indian subcultures, by P.K. Dhillon and Shereen Pestonjee. The study of Malaysian parental attitudes involved randomly selected mothers and fathers who were interviewed during visiting hours at the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital Maternity Ward and medical students from the National University of Malaysia. Participants were asked questions related to the roles anticipated by men and women in child rearing. Findings indicated that, despite an increasing flexibility in the roles and activities considered permissible for each sex, traditional sex-role stereotypes remain pervasive in Malaysian society. Subjects held the traditional view that child-rearing is largely the responsibility of women, assuming that mothers/females have greater effect on child development. Findings of the Indian study of ethnic influences on adolescents' marital role expectations indicated subculture differences on authority, home-making, and child care, sex differences on overall marital role expectation scores and on many of its sub-factors, and differences in the egalitarian and traditional ways of thinking of adolescents on the overall marital role expectations and all seven sub-factors. (RH)

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SYMPOSIUM V B : Sex Roles

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CHAIRPERSON *Dr. Colleen Ward*
RAPPORTEUR *Mr. Moses Samuel*

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Towards Active Participation of Fathers/Father-Surrogates in Our Child-Rearing Practices

Sokhong Lua

INTRODUCTION

Recently, there has been considerable concern regarding the role of fathers during childbirth. Such concern has led new trends in child-rearing practices; topics on 'fathering/fatherhood' are appearing increasingly in the titles of books and magazines (Lamb, 1981; Beail and McGuire, 1982). It is time for us to explore and investigate the traditional but underestimated role of fathers/father-surrogates in child-care. This is because too much emphasis has been given to the maternal role in child-care which has achieved much publicity and hence made considerable impact upon notions of child-rearing practices.

A great landmark in this issue of maternal role in child-care was Bowlby's (1951) monograph on mental care and mental health which was written on behalf of the World Health Organisation as a contribution to the United Nations programme for the welfare of homeless children. Bowlby advanced the point of view that children deprived of their mother's care or that of a permanent mother substitute during their first two years of life are likely to suffer intellectually, physically or emotionally from such deprivation. In his monograph on mental care and mental health, Bowlby stated that:

> What is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and young children should experience a warm, intimate and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother sub-

> stitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment. Given this relationship, the emotion of anxiety and guilt, which in excess characterize mental ill-health, will develop in a moderate and organised way (Bowlby, 1951).

During the years that followed, investigators from a wide variety of fields or disciplines have painstakingly elaborated the process by which children become attached to their mothers and the detrimental effects of maternal deprivation. This overemphasised views of maternal care has resulted in a relatively little known fact and almost neglected area regarding the role of fathers in child-care. Child-care publications are directed almost wholly to mothers; mothers are simply more accessible than fathers to researchers, confining the studies of child-rearing practices within the framework of mother-child relationship. However, with the rapidity of change in social values, the changing nature of sex-roles and the growth of the Women's Liberation Movement in the Western countries, researchers have diverted their attention to the importance of fathers in child-rearing practices. During the 1970s, the major growth in research on fathering/fatherhood occurred and since then, such changes in the conceptualisation of fatherhood holds great significance for child-rearing practices. In his book *Maternal Deprivation Reassessed*, Rutter (1982) provides research findings which refute many of Bowlby's views and hence question the existing theories of child-care. It is encouraging to see such apparent shift in interests given to the role that fathers play in their child's life.

Rutter (1979) reported that the patterns of family life in Western countries have changed during recent years. For instance, many mothers of young children go out to work and young children are looked after by child-minder or placed in day-care centres. With the increase rate of divorce, children are being brought up by single-parent. It appears that such changing values and structures of family life have also occurred in most Asian countries even though Asian society is still dominantly characterised as 'mother-centred' in its child-rearing practices – traditional family life in which the father goes out to work and the mother stays at home to look after the children. The scale and speed of change is increasing rapidly in Asian cities such as Kuala Lumpur whereby women, single or married/mothers, constitute a sizeable proportion of the workforce. The figures quoted from the *Report of the Labour Force Survey 1979* (Table 1) indicates such trends. Jolly, a British paediatrician, called for a change in Malaysian attitudes toward fatherhood and child-care when he delivered a lecture on the role of fathers in Kuala Lumpur (*The Malay Mail*, 1983). This call for change is strongly supported and there is an urgent need to re-examine and re-assess our child-rearing practices. It seems that until we change our attitudes especially regarding the traditional underestimated role of fathers/father-surrogates, it is unlikely that improvement in our child-care will be achieved.

Table 1
Percentage Distribution of Employed Persons (Female) by Occupations in Peninsular Malaysia

Occupations	Year	
	1975	1979
Professional and 'techincal	34.9	39.3
Administrative and managerial	3.7	6.0
Clerical	35.8	42.1
Sales	2 6.7	28.3
Service workers	45.2	45.3
Agricultural, animal husbandry, forestry, fishing and hunting	41.2	43.1
production, transport, equipment, operators Labourers	24.4	24.4

Source. *Report of the Labour Force Survey* 1979 (Ministry of Labour and Manpower, Malaysia).

SURVEY

The present study was undertaken as an exploratory investigation of parental attitudes toward child-rearing practices. This study also represents an attempt to investigate and analyse the nature and extent of involvement of Malaysian fathers in child-case. Generally, the study hopes to reflect this current upsurge of interest regarding the role of fathers in child-rearing practices.

RESULTS

The design of the survey was relatively simple and an interviews schedule was used. Interviews were conducted with mothers and fathers during the visiting hours at the Kuala Lumpur General Hospital Maternity Ward. The subjects interviewed were picked at random. Another group of subjects comprised medical students from the National University of Malaysia and they were asked to answer the same questionnaires. Questions asked were specifically concerned with the roles anticipated by men (married/single) and women (married/single) in the child-rearing practices

The total number of subjects who participated in the survey was 69 and they were divided into four groups, namely (1) male married group (n=18); (2) male single group (unmarried, n=17); (3) female married group (n-20) and (4) female single group (unmarried, n=14). The sample was small since the selection of the subjects for the survey was dependent on the number present at the time when the interview was conducted.

Table 2 provides data on the roles anticipated in child-care. A point of interest arising from the survey is the generality of the findings, that is, child-care is still considered as a 'woman's domain'. In other words, traditional stereotyped conceptualisation of child-care that is confined

exclusively to the mother-child relationship is still a widely-held view. A significant number of subjects of both sexes regards mothers/female as more capable of looking after children; fathers/male are perceived as less competent in this respect. However, it is noteworthy that the experience of having children seems to have altered the attitudes toward child-care. In the survey sample, 17% of male married group/fathers and 10% of female married group/mothers interviewed considered fathers/male as more capable of looking after children as compared to the male single group and female single group who have yet to have children of their own. These are the groups that seem to be strongly influenced by the traditional view of child-care. Similarly, 83% of male married group think that they can become 'mother-substitute' to the children whereas only 41% of male single group feel that they can perform such a role. It seems here that father's/male's perception of their capability to look after children is affected by the experience of having children themselves, that is, relevant prior experience of child-care.

Table 2
Roles Anticipated in Child-Care

(A) Involvement in child-care

Degree of Involvement	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
More involvement	1	6	1	6	10	50	7	50
Equal involvement	16	88	14	82	10	50	7	50
Less involvement	1	6	2	12	0	0	0	0
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(B) Capability in child-care

Degree of Capability	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Father is more capable	3	17	0	0	2	10	0	0
Mother is more capable	12	66	14	82	18	90	11	79
Both parents are capable	0	0	3	18	0	0	3	21
Do not know	3	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

Table 2 (contd.)

(C) Mother substitute in child-care

Degree of Mother-Substitute	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	15	83	7	41	13	65	10	72
No	3	17	7	41	7	35	3	21
Do not know	0	0	3	18	0	0	1	7
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(D) Equal partnership in child-care

Equal Partnership	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	16	89	17	100	18	90	13	93
No	2	11	0	0	2	10	1	7
Do not know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(E) More active role in child-care

Degree of Active Role	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Father should take a more active role	2	11	1	6	1	5	1	27
Mother should take a more active role	6	33	8	47	7	35	6	43
Both parents should take an active role	10	56	8	47	12	60	7	50
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

Table 2 (contd.)

(F) Looking after the child full-time

Looking After the Child Full-Time by Subject/Subjects Wife/ Women	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	13	72	10	59	13	65	6	45
No	5	28	7	41	7	35	6	43
Do not know	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	14
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(G) Presence at child-birth

Presence At Child-Birth	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	15	83	9	53	14	70	12	86
No	3	17	8	47	6	30	2	14
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(H) Paternity leave

Paternity Leave	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	13	72	13	76	17	85	13	93
No	5	28	4	24	3	15	1	7
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

(I) Men are more responsible and patient towards the child's needs

Men Are More Responsible and Patient Towards Child's Needs	Males				Females			
	Married		Single		Married		Single	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	10	56	2	12	14	70	4	29
No	8	44	15	88	6	30	10	71
Total	18	100	17	100	20	100	14	100

Regarding the issue of involvement in child-care, 88% of male married group and 82% of male single group felt that there should be equal involvement between wife/mother and husband/father in child-care. However, only half of the female group (married/single) agreed to equal involvement in child-care. The other 50% of the female group (married/single) indicated their need to be more involved in child-care. They appeared to be reluctant to negotiate or compromise on the involvement that can be contributed by fathers/male in the bringing up of children. In a way, this may indicate their failure to acknowledge the role of fathers/male in child-care. Yet, they agreed to equal partnership in the upbringing of children (female married group = 90%; female single group = 93%) and that both parents should take an active role in child-care. Similarly, a significant number of fathers/male agreed to equal partnership in child-care. However, a unique role for fathers as described by the male group (married/single) interviewed in the survey is that of a 'play-mate' to their children. Thus the responsibility of fathers would not be one of directly caring and looking after children. Fathers seem to be able to play with their children more than mothers who tend to do more child-care such as feeding and also fulfilling the child's other basic needs. Most of the female married group felt that the children are more attached to their fathers.

Even though there is an incompatibility between fathers/male and mothers/female regarding the maternal role in child-care, all groups interviewed agreed that mothers/female should look after the children full-time. On a practical level, financial constraints force mothers/female to join the workforce in society. Therefore, there are two groups of mothers/female, namely (1) those who do not wish to go out to work but are forced to do so by economic circumstances and (2) those who prefer to work anyway. On the whole, there is no significant evidence to suggest an association between married male/female groups and the types of wife (full-time housewife/worker) at the 5% significance level.

There tends to be no difference in emphasis between male and female subjects with regard to the reading of child-care books. Most of the subjects interviewed (married/single) mentioned that they had at least read one child-care book. Most of the married men said that they would not go out of their way to buy or search for books on child-care unless they were available in their homes.

Table 3
Chi-Square 2 x 2 Contingency Tables

(A) Comparison of male subjects (married group) with their preference of type of wife

Type of Wife	Married Male Subjects Whose Wife Is Either:	
	Full-Time Housewife	Full-Time Worker
Full-time housewife	8	5
Full-time worker	2	3

Note. Chi-square = 0.101*. For Table 3A, 3B and 3C, the acceptable level of significance is 0.05. The degree of freedom is 1.

(B) Comparison of female subjects (married group) with their preference

Preference	Married Female Subjects Who Are Either:-	
	Full-Time Housewife	Full-Time Worker
Full-time housewife	4	9
Full-time worker	2	5

(C) Comparison of the sex of subjects (male = 35; female = 34) with reading of child-care books

Reading Child-Care Books	Sex	
	Male	Female
Yes	21	21
No	14	13

Over 70% of all the groups in the survey agreed that fathers/husbands should be given paid paternity leave to be with their wives during child-birth and also the first few days of the baby's life. Paternity leave should be between 6 to 8 days; the main reason given included the need to be with their wives during the arrival of the baby and most mothers/female welcome such moral support from the fathers/male. Similarly, over 70% of the groups, except the male single group, would like to be present at child-birth. A total of 47% of the male single group would prefer not to be around during child-birth. The viewpoint that men are more responsible and patient toward the child's needs was expressed by a majority of the female married group (70%) and male married group (56%) as compared to only male single group (12%) and female single group (29%). This indicates again the effects of having children which tend to change a person's attitudes and perception of child-rearing practices. As indicated in Table 4, a significant number of subjects perceive the change of male role in Malaysian child-care as compared to the situation ten years ago.

Table 4
Comparison of the Change of Male Role in Child-Care

Subjects	No. Responding	Percentage Indicating	
		Change of Male Role	No Change of Male Role
Male			
Married	18	83.3	16.7
Single	17	76.5	23.5
Female			
Married	20	80.0	20.0
Single	14	78.6	21.4

Note. Total number of male and female is 35 and 34 respectively.

CLINICAL CASES

The Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (MAT) attached to the Medical Faculty, National University of Malaysia provides an interdisciplinary approach to the prevention, diagnosis, assessment and management of developmental disabilities. The team comprises a paediatrician, psychologist, speech therapist, dietician, occupational therapist, education officer from the Ministry of Education and welfare officer from the Wilayah Social Welfare Department.

Table 5 shows the classification of referral cases by MAT as recorded from 11 March, 1982 to 18 August, 1983. The total number of referred cases was 127, 80 boys as compared to 47 girls. A larger number of boys referred has been classified as having behavioural problems that include anxiety, fears, poor social-peer relationship, aggressive behaviour and autistic behaviour. Similarly, 27 cases of boys referred were diagnosed as having known organic/genetic cause and 23 cases were diagnosed as having specific speech delay. In contrast, 18 cases and 10 cases of girls referred were classified as having known organic/genetic cause and specific speech delay respectively. There is little difference in other classifications of the problems referred between boys and girls.

The National University of Malaysia's Paediatric Department of Psychological Service was started only in July, 1983. The cases referred to the Service are mainly for the psychological evaluation of the child's abilities. Usually, the specific problems of the referred child has been diagnosed by the referral agency, that is, specialists of the Neurosurgery Department. Since the service was started recently, only 37 cases were recorded from 1 August, 1983 to 28 October, 1983. Out of this small number of cases, there was almost an equal number of boys and girls (19 boys and 18 girls). However, there is an interesting comparison of the family background of

Table 5
Referral Cases of the Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (MAT) and Paediatric Department of Psychological Services of the National University of Malaya

Classifications	MAT				Paediatric Dept. of Psychological Service			
	Sex of Subjects				Sex of Subjects			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Behavioural Problems – (anxiety, fears, poor social-peer relationship)	14	11.0	5	3.9	5	13.5	4	10.8
Known Organic/ Genetic Cause (Down's syndrome, minimal brain damage)	27	21.3	18	11.2	4	10.8	5	13.5
Specific Speech Delay	23	18.1	10	7.9	4	10.8	1	2.7
Poor School Progress/Slow Learner	2	1.6	2	1.6	3	8.1	7	19.0
Global Mental Retardation	5	3.9	8	6.3	2	5.4	1	2.7
Child Abuse	1	0.9	0	0	1	2.7	0	0
Unclassified/ Ambiguous Cases	8	6.3	4	3.0	0	0	0	0
Total	80		47		19		18	

Note. Multidisciplinary Assessment Team referral cases as recorded from 11 March, 1982 to 18 August, 1983 where N = 127. National University of Malaya's Paediatrics Department of Psychological Services referral cases as recorded from 1 August, 1983 to 28 October, 1983 where N = 37.

the cases referred at the Psychological Service. A total of 24 cases were from families where mothers were full-time housewives and only 7 cases were from working mothers. Information could not be gathered for 6 cases regarding the status of mothers, that is, whether they were working or full-time housewives.

RESEARCH ON FATHERING

Research on fathering results from a growing concern with the psychological, social and economic disadvantages often suffered by fatherless children. However, it is important to note that father-absence *per se* does not necessarily lead to developmental deficits and/or causes the father-absent child to be inferior in psychological functioning relative to the father-present child. A child does not necessarily have to be separated from his/her father to suffer from paternal deprivation. Paternal deprivation is a term that can be used to include various inadequacies a child experiences with his/her father or father-surrogate. It can be in the context of total father-absence or separation from the father for some extended period of time. On the other hand, paternal deprivation can also occur when the father is available or present but there is relatively no meaningful father-child relationship.

In this review, research on fathering/paternal deprivation, namely, paternal influence and cognitive functioning, moral development and effects of paternal power on identification and sex-typing is discussed. Studies concerning father-absence and cognitive functioning (Kimball, 1952; Shaw and White, 1965; Radin, 1972; Blanchard and Biller, 1971) have indicated the adverse effects of such absence on children's cognitive functioning. In this instance, Santrock (1972) found that early father-absence can have a very significant debilitating effect on cognitive functioning. In his study, Santrock included children from lower-class junior high and high school children and he found that: (1) children whose father was absent before the age of five scored significantly lower on measures of IQ and achievement that had been administered when they were in the 3rd and 6th grade (2) the most detrimental effect occurred when father-absence was due to divorce, desertion or separation rather than due to death (3) there was some support for positive remedial effects of a stepfather for boys especially when the stepfather/father surrogate joined the family before the child was five years old. Lessing, Zagorin and Nelson (1970), in their study of father-absence and cognitive functioning, reported additional evidence, that there exists a rather complex interaction between father-absence and social class, that is, middle-class children did not appear to be as handicapped by father-absence whereas among working-class children, those who were experiencing father-absence performed at a generally lower level in their verbal functioning as well as on perceptual-motor and manipulative-spatial tasks than did those who were experiencing father-presence. It has been argued that if a relationship does hold between father-absence and certain types of cognitive functioning, father-absence *per se* is only one of the many variables responsible for such a relationship. The values of the mother, siblings and peer groups are extremely important. Among children in the lower class, father-absence usually intensifies a lack of exposure

to certain cognitive functioning. In addition, many boys in their masculine over-compensation perceive intellectual tasks and school in general as 'feminine'. The school situation which presents women as authority figures with strong demands for obedience and conformity is a great contrast to boys' conscious values and desperate attempt to feel masculine. According to Biller (1971), many of these boys develop an almost phobic reaction concerning intellectual matters.

Another area of paternal deprivation that has been studied is moral development. In his study, Hoffman (1971) compared father-absence and father-presence groups, controlling for sex, IQ and social class, regarding their moral attributes and overt aggression. All subjects were 7th grade white children and the data obtained was based on structural and semi-projective items and ratings by parents, teachers and peers. Hoffman found that father-absent boys obtained lower scores for all the moral indexes – significantly lower for internal moral judgement, maximum guilt following transgressions, acceptance of blame, moral value and rule conformity. In addition, father-absent boys were rated by teachers as more aggressive than father-present boys. On the other hand, no difference was observed between father-absent girls and father-present girls.

Evidence of the effects of paternal power on identification and sex-typing are remarkably consistent. For instance, Hetherington (1965) found that boys who view their fathers as competent and dominant in dispensing rewards and punishments are similar to their fathers. Furthermore, they are more masculine than boys who view their fathers as lacking in these characteristics. However, maternal dominance appears to be particularly disruptive for identification and sex-typing in boys. In contrast, parental dominance (maternal or paternal) is not related to femininity in girls although dominance in fathers facilitates girls' cross-sex identification on non-sex typed traits. Girls with powerful mothers or fathers are equally feminine but those with dominant fathers acquire some of their father's traits which are appropriate to both boys and girls such as a good sense of humour and friendliness. Thus, the role of fathers is so central to identification theories of sex-typing that a corollary assumption is often made that where the father is absent, boys remain mother-identified and likely to develop feminine sex-social characteristics and latent or even overt homosexual tendencies. Indeed, studies of the effects of father-absence (Lynn and Sawrey, 1959; Biller and Borstelmann, 1967; Hetherington, 1966) have suggested the development of inappropriate sex-typing. However, it has been argued that these studies have been limited to young children and the effect of very short period of father-absence. The effects of prolonged father-absence on sex-typing in the adolescent or adult have not been systematically determined and the results obtained have been less consistent than those in younger children. Another point that needs to be mentioned in the studies of father-absence and sex-role development is the possible effects of differences in maternal encouragement of mas-

culine behaviour among father-absent boys. Results obtained by Biller (1969) in his study of father-absence, maternal encouragement and sex-role development in kindergarten boys indicated that in father-absent boys, maternal encouragement of masculine behaviour appears to affect sex-role preference and sex-role adoption. Other factors that have to be taken into consideration include the timing (age onset of father-absence), length of father-absence, socio-cultural milieu and relative availability of surrogate models, that is, father-surrogates including grandfathers, uncles, male-neighbours or even elder brothers.

DISCUSSION

Despite an increasing flexibility in the roles and activities considered permissible for each sex, for instance, similarity of educational experiences of girls and boys from kindergarten through the secondary school system, fathers doing the dishes, cleaning the house and carrying out other domestic tasks which traditionally considered exclusively as 'feminine', mothers holding jobs outside the home and girls and women adopt 'masculine' clothing (wearing jeans) and hair-style (short hair-cut), there is evidence that traditional sex-role stereotypes are still pervasive in Malaysian society. It seems that Malaysian men and women, on the whole, still hold to the traditional view that child-rearing practice is largely a woman/female responsibility. The findings of the study have been quite consistent in showing no significant differences between male and female subjects with respect to their role anticipation in child-care based on the assumption that mothers/female have greater effect on child-development. On the other hand, fathers/male role in the development of the child, especially early child-development, is of dubious importance.

It is tempting for Malaysian society to continue to regard child-care as a 'woman's role' in spite of the fact that there have been role changes in child-care. Even though fathers/male find themselves in conflict with mothers/female over their role in child-care, these problems usually remain implicit rather than explicit. In discussing the issue, the intention is not role-reversal or exhange of roles of fathers and mothers in child-care. Rather, it is intended to demonstrate that the Malaysian society, in general, underestimates the important contribution of fathers/male in child-care. Fathers should seek to function more effectively in their roles and father, mother and child need to know how to work as a team, how to share duties and how to cope with their child's rapid and/or delayed development. According to Beail (1983), 'we should seek moves towards approaches which encompass all family interaction, where parenting means parenting and not just mothering'. Research on fathering as reviewed in this paper has resulted in-the growing acceptance of the role of fathers and its implications on the development of children.

Differences in parents' behaviour towards boys and girls from infancy to adolescence are well-documented. For instance, Droppleman and Schaeffer (1963) found that parents give boys more independence as well as punishment than girls. Hence, it is obvious that mothers and fathers play different roles toward their children and that the exact roles which each plays varies according to the sex of the child. Parents project on to children the disposition and orientations appropriate to male or famale sex-roles. Besides that, parents respond to behaviour in terms of the sex-role identity they attribute to their children and, in this way, create in them an awareness of their attributed sex-role identification. However, the masculine role is more difficult for boys to learn since it involves a shift away from the mother as an appropriate adult model and that the father's role model is relatively unavailable since it is considered to be of dubious importance. Fathers may tend to play a more significant role in the latter part of the child's life than the early years in the child's development. On the other hand, women tend to play too dominant a role during the early years of the child's development since he or she is being looked after by female-figure (mothers/grandmothers/women caretakers). Later, when the child enters nursery/kindergarten/primary school, the whole situation is again dominated by female figures. Malaysian classroom situations tend to be too feminised. Again, if the child is hospitalised, he/she will be looked after by the female nurses (there are very few/or hardly any male nurses in Malaysia). Attention is drawn to the clinical cases referred to MAT that should be of concern to us all since 60% of the referral cases are boys. Indeed, arguments about the question of the relative contribution and impact of fathers on their sons' problematic behaviour, especially delinquency, have received much attention from sociologists who have contributed some of the most significant research concerning father's role in child-rearing practices. This indicates that there is more to the parent-child relationship than that which involves only mother-child relationship. McKee and O'Brien argue that 'it is not enough for research merely to turn from mothers to fathers since this can only be a short term and remedial strategy'. Thus, the need to evaluate the role of fathers in child-care still remains a relevant issue.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind again that the findings reported in this study are related to the sample only. It is hoped that this broad introductory survey will draw 'public attention' to questions regarding the role of Malaysian fathers in child-rearing practices which remains to be a neglected and underestimated area that needs further investigation within the Asian context. There should be a shift from a traditional method of child-care orientation towards active participation of fathers/father-surrogates in order to achieve improvement and progressive changes in our child-rearing practices.

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Variations in Marital Role Expectations Among Adolescents of Three Indian Sub-Cultures **

P.K. Dhillon and Shereen Pestonjee

The present research is an attempt to study the influence of child-rearing practices in three sub-cultures (Bengali, Tamilian and Andhrite) on marital role expectations. The total sample consisted of 240 adolescents within the age range of 15–18 years. Of these, 80 adolescents (40 males and 40 females) belonged to each of the three sub-cultures. These adolescents were drawn from the middle income group (lower-middle, middle-middle and upper-middle) and were studying in classes IX, X, XI or XII in schools of their own sub-cultures (Bengali, Andhra and Tamil) in Delhi.

The instrument used was 'The marriage role expectation inventory' by Marie Dunn. It reveals, evaluates and compares the expectations of the self and the marriage partner in seven areas of behaviour – authority, home-making, care of children, personal characteristics, social participation, education and employment, and support.

A 3x2x2 factorial design (3 sub-cultures, 2 sexes, and variable divided into 2 parts – equalitarian and traditional) with repeated measures on the last factor was used to analyse the data. The results indicate the following findings: (a) there are significant differences in the adolescents of the three sub-cultures (Bengali, Tamilian and Andhrite) on three sub-factors (authority, home-making and care of children) of the marital role expectations (b) male and female adolescents in the three sub-cultures differ significantly on the overall marital role expectation scores and on many of its sub-factors (c) there are significant differences in the equalitarian and traditional ways of thinking of adolescents, on the overall marital role expectations and all seven sub-factors. The results of the first order and second order interactions are discussed in the light of child-rearing practices and different findings.